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THE IMMUNE FIX

10 Ways You're Sabotaging Your Immune System

HEALING *with* MACA

IT HELPS EVERYTHING FROM **DEPRESSION** TO **FATIGUE** TO **BRAIN FOG**

EASY & PROTEIN-PACKED PASTA E CECI p. 48

The Benefits (and Bliss!) of OAT MILK

6 Rainforest Herbs

for Weight Loss, Arthritis, Digestive Problems, & More

Special Report: The Growing Toxic Problem in Our Food

VISIT…

INTRODUCING

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DAVID PERLMUTTER, M.D., F.A.C.N

A leading expert on the human microbiome, America's brain health expert and #1 *New York Times* best-selling author, David Perlmutter, M.D., is a board-certified neurologist and a fellow of the American College of Nutrition. Additionally, Dr. Perlmutter is a founding member and fellow of the American Board of Integrative and Holistic Medicine. He truly provides exceptional insight and a unique perspective on the role of nutrition in health, particularly as it applies to the human microbiome. The Dr. Formulated line includes the essentials to support a healthy microbiome and help achieve optimal health and overall wellbeing.

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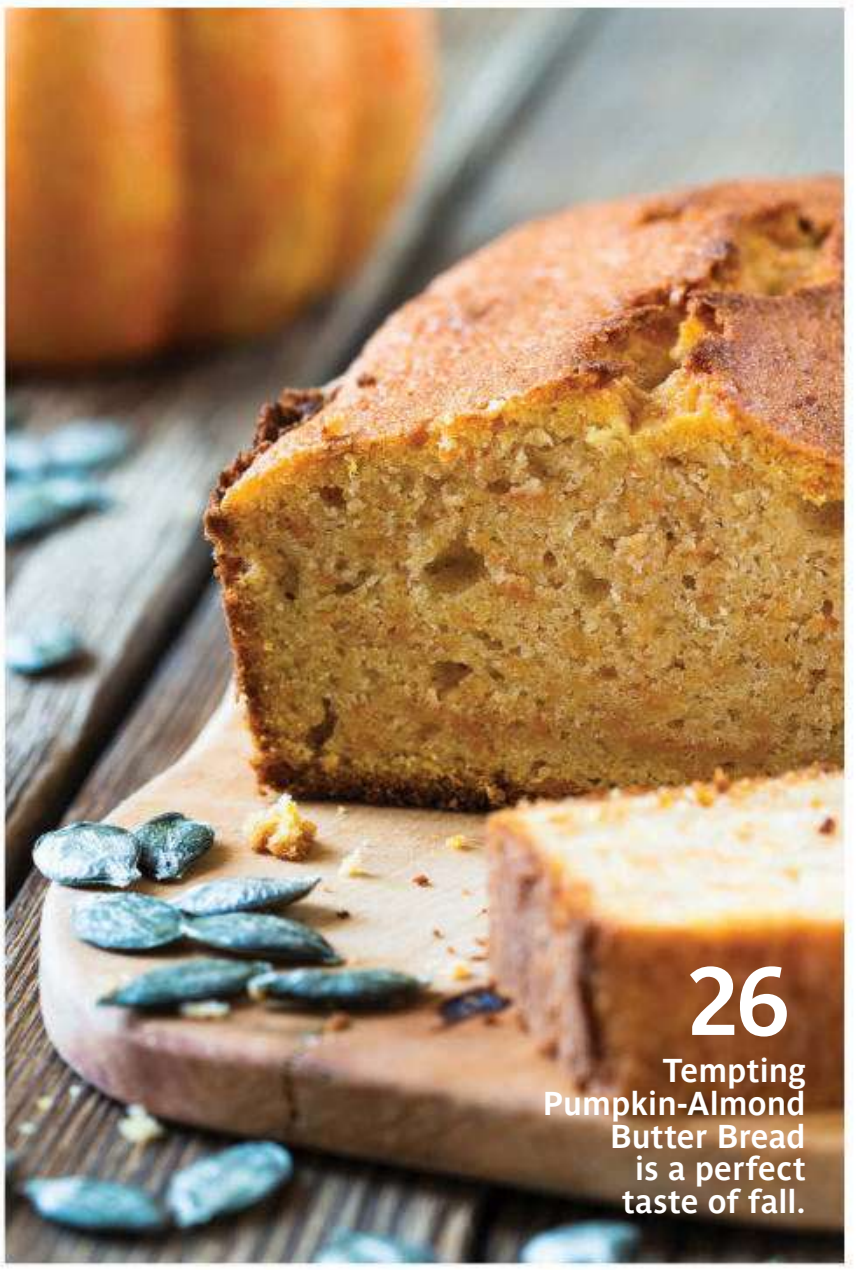

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Spotlight on Immunity
A month-long look at boosting your natural defenses, including:

***BN*'s Buyer's Guide to Immune Health Supplements**

*

31-Day Immune Health Challenge

*

4 Hacks to Improve Your Immunity

*

Don't Boost Your Immune System, Balance It!

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Sleep On It

I have always been an 8-hours-per-night person. When I don't get enough sleep, I feel like a zombie the next day (an irritable zombie!). My focus and productivity take a nosedive and, physically, I just don't feel well.

Since the pandemic hit, I haven't been sleeping as well or as much as I need to. There's a name for it—coronasomnia. According to the Sleep Foundation, "Coronasomnia is characterized by an increase in sleep problems during the pandemic, as well as symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress."

The reason I bring this up is that sleep is absolutely essential for a healthy immune system—in fact, it's one of the most important aspects of overall health in my opinion. In "10 Ways You're Sabotaging Your Immune System" on p. 28, Lisa Turner explains how all of those late-night Netflix binges are wrecking your body's immune function.

If you're having trouble sleeping for whatever reason, there are a lot of helpful natural sleep formulas and useful tips out there. I like magnesium glycinate before bed—it takes the edge off stress and allows me to fall asleep naturally.

Also, don't hit the snooze button. I'm guilty of this one, but I just learned that this is one of the worst things you can do. Rapid-eye-movement sleep, associated with the cognitive benefits of sleep, happens during the second half of the night. So the more uninterrupted sleep you can get before waking up, the better.

Forget about "sleeping when you're dead"—sleep so you that have a strong immune system and can live a long, healthy life.

Nicole

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NEWS BITES

The Power of Fermented Foods

BY VERA TWEED

If you want to steer clear of colds, flu, and Covid-19, fermented foods are your friends. They hold the key to a diverse gut microbiome, which enables your immune system to mount its best defense against pathogens.

"Seventy percent of our immune system is located along the gut lining," says Vincent Pedre, MD, author of *Happy Gut*. "The gut is the area where the immune system is programmed."

This gut-immune relationship was shown by a study of 100 Covid-19 patients. Researchers found that people with lower levels of certain gut bacteria had more severe illness, higher inflammation, and more tissue damage.

Balanced Immunity

"Your immune response is all about balance," says Pedre. It turns up the inflammation level while fighting a pathogen, and then turns it down once the invader is defeated—if it's working properly. When the inflammatory response continues for too long, it damages tissues, prolongs symptoms, and may cause chronic health conditions.

Why Fermented Foods?

Fermented foods can whip the immune system into better shape, according to a study at the Stanford School of Medicine that tested two types of diets for 10 weeks. One diet was high in fermented foods, while the other was high in fiber.

Fermented foods increased the diversity of microbes in the gut and decreased levels of 19 inflammatory markers in the blood. Fiber helped to maintain beneficial gut bacteria and improve their performance.

Pedre explains it this way: "It's basically saying, 'Hey, if you've got the right amount of good guys in your gut, they're going to help protect you from having a runaway inflammatory immune response that could have you dealing with the worst consequences of any infection that you get.'"

Feed Your Microbiome

Eat a variety of fermented foods, says Pedre, as each food contains different beneficial bacteria. Also eat plenty of high-fiber foods—such as leafy greens, onions, Jerusalem artichokes, and garlic—that support healthy gut microbes.

One serving of a fermented food is about one-quarter cup. But you may need to start small if your gut is in poor shape—perhaps a teaspoon of sauerkraut juice per day. Be consistent and patient, as it can take a month or more for gut bacteria to be replenished.

If you've recently taken antibiotics, add a supplement designed to survive stomach acid that contains a variety of probiotic strains. Doses range from 2.5 billion to 225 billion colony forming units (CFUs) per day.

Fermented Foods

Eat a variety of these:

- Kefir or yogurt (plain, plant-based or organic, grass-fed dairy)
- Sauerkraut (cultured)
- Pickles (cultured)
- Fermented cottage cheese
- Kimchi and other fermented vegetables
- Kombucha

Photo: Getty Images

Your antioxidant armor.

Protect thyself in the fight against free radicals. With more antioxidant power on average than red wine, blueberry juice, or green tea, POM Wonderful 100% Pomegranate Juice is your body's knight in shining armor.

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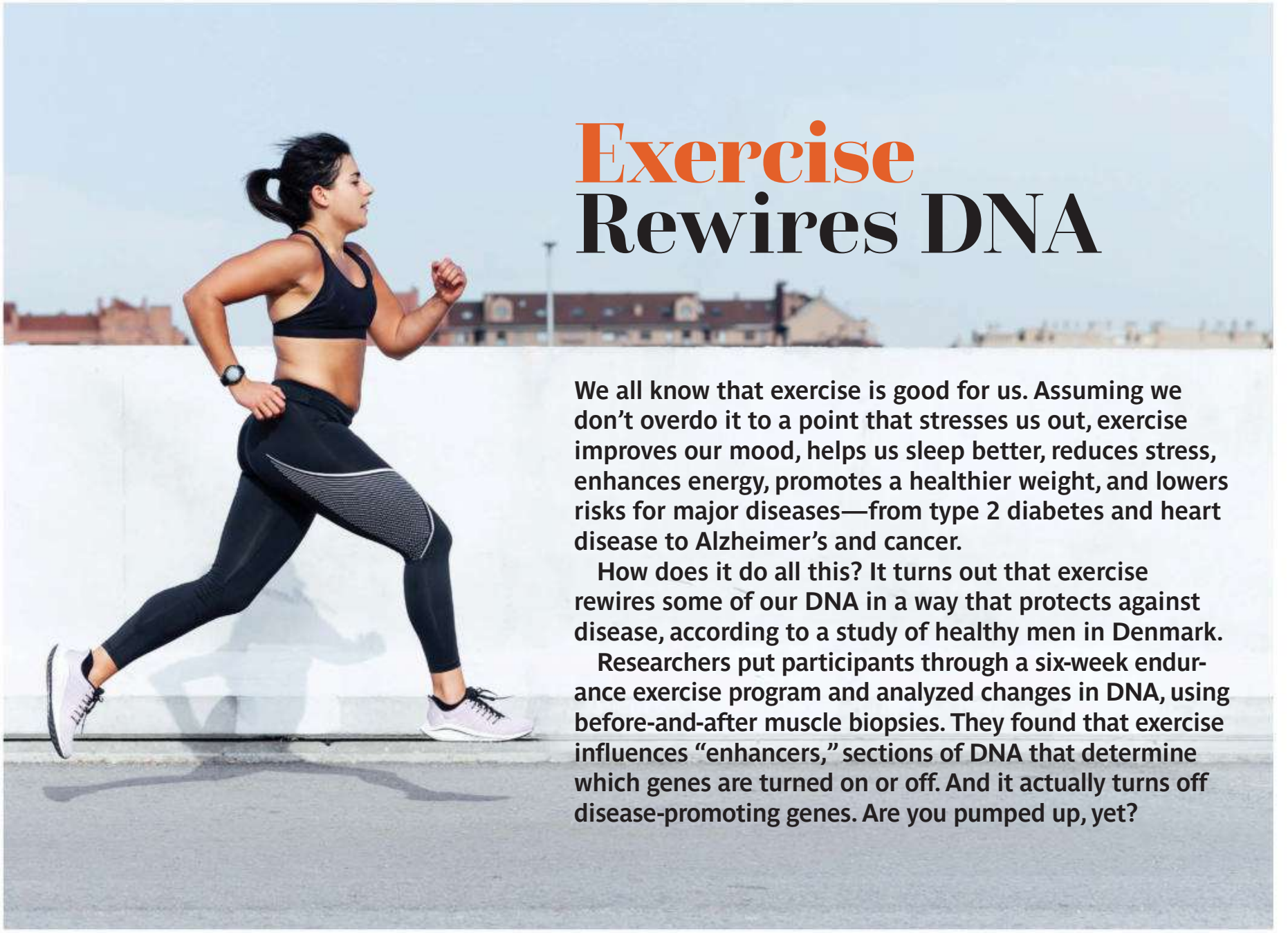
Pycnogenol Reduces Urinary Tract Infections

Women who repeatedly get urinary tract infections are becoming more concerned about overuse of antibiotics, and doctors are left with a dilemma, as there is no other routine treatment for the condition. But a recent study found that Pycnogenol, a proprietary extract from French maritime pine bark, reduces the incidence of UTIs and interstitial cystitis, a painful inflammation of the bladder that can be mistaken for a UTI.

Study participants had recently experienced repeated multiple UTIs or bouts of interstitial cystitis. They were divided into three groups. One group received 150 mg daily of Pycnogenol, another received 400 mg of a cranberry extract, and the third did not receive a supplement.

After two months of daily supplementation, those taking Pycnogenol experienced fewer UTIs or bouts of interstitial cystitis, and more women in this group were symptom-free, compared to the cranberry and other groups. Neither supplement produced side effects.



Exercise Rewires DNA

We all know that exercise is good for us. Assuming we don't overdo it to a point that stresses us out, exercise improves our mood, helps us sleep better, reduces stress, enhances energy, promotes a healthier weight, and lowers risks for major diseases—from type 2 diabetes and heart disease to Alzheimer's and cancer.

How does it do all this? It turns out that exercise rewires some of our DNA in a way that protects against disease, according to a study of healthy men in Denmark.

Researchers put participants through a six-week endurance exercise program and analyzed changes in DNA, using before-and-after muscle biopsies. They found that exercise influences "enhancers," sections of DNA that determine which genes are turned on or off. And it actually turns off disease-promoting genes. Are you pumped up, yet?

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Seeds of Change

In a world filled with snack bars, trail mixes, and other nut-infused treats, Blake's Seed-Based is rewriting the book on allergen-free snacks.

BY NEIL ZEVNIK

Have you browsed the snack bar section at your local health food market lately? You'll find a seemingly endless array of flavors expressed in fruits and grains—and a lot of nuts. So if you're saddled with allergies or intolerances (like me), you'll read the labels, heave a regretful sigh, and reluctantly put most of them right back on the shelf.

Blake Sorensen decided to do something about that. "I had accepted that I couldn't eat pretty much any bar, trail mix, or cookie on the market because they all had nuts in them. And then one day on a long road trip, I walked into a gas station, strolled down the snack bar aisle, and in a moment of frustration said, 'Why don't I just make these myself?' There are 32 million people in the U.S. that have food allergies, and there truly is a lack of healthy, allergen-free snacks for them."

"I don't want anyone with an allergy to feel deprived or scared of snacks," says Blake's Seed-Based founder Blake Sorensen, whose own food allergies led him to create a line of healthy snacks free of nuts, dairy, and other common food irritants.

Raising the Bar

Sorensen focused on creating allergen-free snack bars—first and foremost no tree nuts, but also no peanuts, dairy, gluten, or soy. Experimenting in his kitchen, he used a variety of seeds and fruits to realize his determination to produce something healthy and delicious that everyone could safely enjoy.

The result? Blake's Seed-Based bars and treats. "I don't want anyone with an allergy to feel deprived or scared of snacks. While a snack bar or Rice Krispies treat might not change the world, we can give an athlete fuel to perform, provide a kid with a safe snack to fit in with their friends, and so much more."

These nut-free, gluten-free, vegan snack bars are made from sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and flax seeds; fruits such as raspberries and blueberries; and puffed quinoa and rice. And remember those Rice Krispies treats that Mom used to make? Blake's does them one better with a healthier and tastier version of the time-honored classic.

Wholesome Rewards

"The hardest part about this journey," Sorenson says, "is losing sight of your mission. I always have to remind myself to step back, to look at what we're building and at how far I've come from that moment in the gas station when I decided to take my snacking matters into my own hands."

But in the end, the rewards definitely outweigh the growing pains. "Every child, teenager, and adult out there who is able to safely enjoy a snack that we make—that brings me endless joy. I am motivated to reach everyone who has an allergy and show them that they too can safely snack on something delicious and nutritious."

Photo: Blake's Seed Based

make it!

Crunchy Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Serves 4

Get in an autumn mood with this delightfully different side dish!

2 medium sweet potatoes
2 Tbs. organic unsalted butter, melted
2 Tbs. Primal Kitchen avocado oil
½ Tbs. honey
2 Blake's Seed-Based Blueberry-Lemon snack bars
1 Tbs. O Olive Oil, Blood Orange

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Roast sweet potatoes 30–40 minutes, until cooked through but not mushy, so a small knife can easily pierce side. Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly. Turn oven to broil.
2. Cut sweet potatoes into halves, squeeze to loosen the flesh, and place on foil-lined baking sheet. Combine 1 Tbs. melted butter, avocado oil, and honey, stir well to combine, and drizzle over the sweet potato halves.
3. Break up bars into bowl of food processor and pulse until broken into pieces roughly the size of large peas. Transfer to small bowl. Whisk together remaining butter and olive oil, and toss with crumbled bars.
4. Sprinkle crumble mix over sweet potato halves. Place 5–6 inches from broiler heat about 30 seconds, to warm and crisp a bit. Serve immediately.

Per serving: 280 cal; 3g prot; 19g total fat (5g sat fat); 26g carb; 15mg chol; 60mg sod; 4g fiber; 9g sugar

Photo: Pornchai Mittongtare; Prop Styling: Robin Turk; Food Styling: Claire Stancer

Autumn Gold

We've fallen hard for these premium products, from delicious sparkling juices to anti-inflammatory turmeric chews.

❶ Tasty Turmeric

Tired of popping turmeric capsules? Get all of the herb's anti-inflammatory benefits in a delicious gummy instead. **Gaia Herbs Turmeric Supreme Adult Daily Gummies** have 3.4 grams of turmeric and 60 mg of total curcuminoids per serving. You'll also find **Extra Strength Gummies** with 6.6 grams of turmeric and an impressive 95 mg of total curcuminoids per serving.

❷ Sunny Side Up

A portable, organic, and all-in-one lunch for kids (or adults!) without ultra-processed ingredients or mounds of sugar? Yes, finally! **Sunnie Fresh Lunch** pre-made boxes use fresh alternative ingredients, such as peanut-free sunflower seed butter, cassava flour, and strawberry beet jam. Pick from **Pizza Pack, Taco Kit,** and **SB&J Builder.** Also try Sunnie's new **Fresh Snacks** packs.

❸ Lemon Love

Next time you find yourself staring at rows of protein and energy bars, grab a **Hungry Buddha Keto Bar Lemon Blueberry.** These addictive bars are chewy, so you can take your time eating one. Zesty citrus is combined with sweet berry (think lemon blueberry muffin) for a protein-packed, on-the-go treat. They're plant-based, non-GMO, Keto-certified, and peanut-free. Just 2 grams of sugar per bar.

❹ Amber All Day

Warming, rich, and slightly sweet, **Indigo Wild's** newest scent, **Amber**, evokes a calming yet mysterious atmosphere. Made with goat's milk and essential oil blends infused with olive, coconut, and castor oils, **Zum Bar** is luxurious and moisturizing. Freshen up your car, gym bag, bathroom, or linen with a quick spritz of **Zum Mist**. And lighten your mood, soy-based **Zum Glow**.

❺ Juice Joy

Suja Organic Elements Cold-Pressed Sparkling Juice is a refreshing cold-pressed juice blend carbonated to perfection. Each features the ultimate wellness boost—probiotics, prebiotics, zinc, and vitamins C and D to support immune and microbiome health. Available in **Blueberry Ginger, Grapefruit Citrus, Pineapple Orange,** and **Strawberry Passionfruit.**

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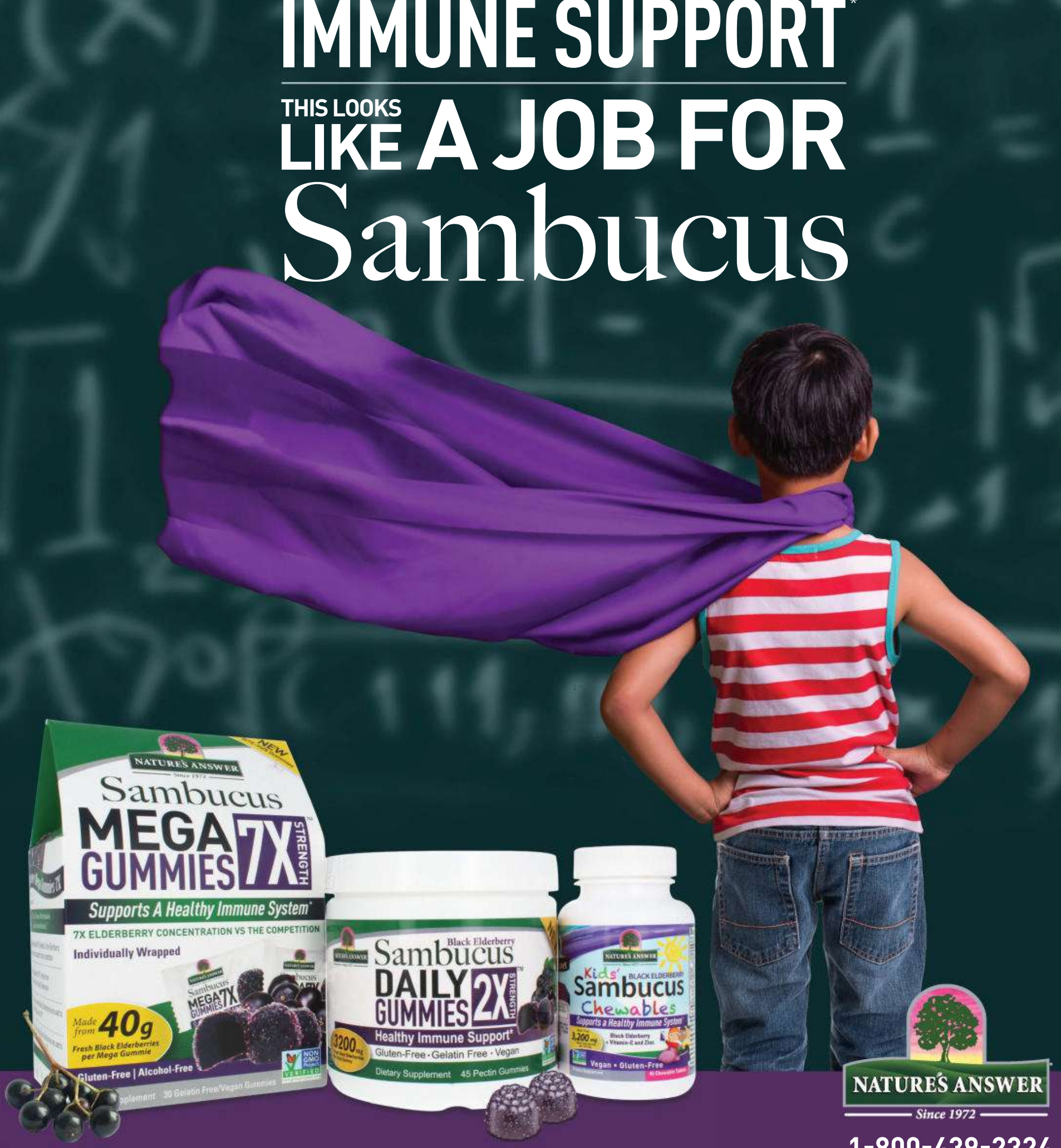

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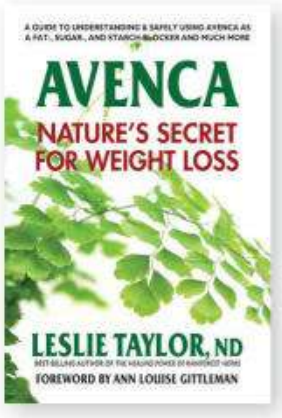
Out of the Amazon

Some of nature's most powerful healers come from the depths of the South American rainforest. Here's why—and what you should look for in supplements.

BY VERA TWEED

An herb from the rainforest may seem more exotic than one from an American or European environment, but that's not the only difference. Because of its diversity, the rainforest produces herbs that are naturally more potent healers.



"More than half of the world's estimated 10 million species of plants, animals, and insects live only in the tropical rainforests, which make up about 15 percent of the planet," says Leslie Taylor, ND, author of *Avenca: Nature's Secret for Weight Loss* and other books about rainforest herbs. "The diversity of plant species in the Amazon," she adds, "is the highest on earth."

All of this diversity creates an immensely challenging environment. An abundance of different species of mold, fungi, bacteria, viruses, parasites, and insects—not to mention animals—can attack and kill a plant at any time. In response, plants must work harder to defend themselves, which they do by producing chemical substances.

"These chemical defenses—much like an immune system for plants—include a wealth of very potent, highly active plant chemicals that provide medicinal uses for humankind," explains Taylor.

In short, because they work so hard to survive, rainforest herbs are especially rich sources of healing substances. These six herbs are Taylor's top choices for different situations.

Avenca for Weight Loss

Used to treat respiratory and other ailments for nearly 2,000 years, avenca is a type of fern. Lab and animal research has shown that it contains an array of substances that support a balanced immune system, reduce harmful inflammation, and promote weight loss.

Taylor has found that taking avenca can lead to significant weight loss without dietary or lifestyle changes (although a healthy diet and exercise are always optimal). The herb reduces absorption of sugar, starch, and fat during digestion; leads to less storage of fat; and increases release of fat from fat cells.

Taylor recommends taking avenca with 16 ounces of water, 10–15 minutes before each meal and snack. The dosage depends on the size of the meal. Take

Photo: Adobe Stock

Let's Talk Immune Health

Immune system support for the whole family.

Bio-Kult is the original formulation with 14 probiotic strains to support the digestive and immune system.

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1.5–2 grams before a large meal; 1 gram before an average meal; or 500 mg before a small meal or between-meal snack.

Chanca Piedra for Kidney Stones, Gout, and Viral Infections

Its name in Spanish means "stone breaker," and it has been traditionally used in the Amazon to treat kidney stones. It also treats gallstones and can prevent the formation of both.

Chanca piedra lowers uric acid levels, which helps prevent and treat gout attacks. It also enhances liver function, helps relieve short-term muscle pain from exertion, and helps to prevent or enhance recovery from viral infections, including herpes and stomach viruses.

To treat stones, take 500 mg, 3 times daily, until the stone is gone. If you are susceptible to gallstones or kidney stones and want to prevent them from forming, take 500 mg, 2 times daily, every 3–4 days. Follow a similar regimen for gout attacks or viral infections.

Anamu for Bacterial and Parasitic Infections

This herb has broad-spectrum antimicrobial effects and can treat drug-resistant bacteria as well as intestinal parasites. Anamu helps balance the response of the immune system and reduce harmful inflammation.

When traveling to an area where bacteria, parasites, and viruses pose a risk, take anamu for protection against bacteria and parasites along with chanca piedra for protections against viruses. A typical dose of anamu is 1–2 grams daily.

Cat's Claw for Ongoing Immune Support and Arthritis Relief

Cat's claw is a vine whose name comes from the shape of its hook-like thorns. It enhances healthy immune response, tames harmful overactivity of the immune system, and reduces damaging inflammation.

One study of 45 people with osteoarthritis found that, compared to a placebo, cat's claw reduced pain within the first week. Another study, which lasted for 24 weeks, tested the herb among 40 people who were taking medications for rheumatoid arthritis. Compared to a placebo, cat's claw reduced the number of painful and swollen joints.

A study of cat's claw for immune health found that taking 350 mg of the herb, twice daily, sped up and enhanced the immune response to a pneumonia vaccine.

Taylor recommends taking cat's claw for arthritis and other inflammatory conditions, including inflammatory bowel diseases, as well as for a healthy immune system. A common daily dose is 1–1.5 grams.

Sangre de Grado for Healing Wounds and Digestive Conditions

Also called "dragon's blood," sangre de grado is a sap from the tree of the same name. It can be applied topically to wounds or taken internally.

Topically, it acts as a natural liquid bandage on any type of cut, scrape, or puncture. It seals a wound and stops bleeding while fighting bacteria, preventing scarring, and enhancing healing.

When taken internally, it helps to calm inflammation in the digestive tract, heals internal wounds such as ulcers, and relieves diarrhea. Taylor recommends it for any type of inflammatory stomach or bowel condition, such as ulcerative colitis.

Look for a liquid form without alcohol. For internal use, make sure the product is a dietary supplement and take 10–15 drops, twice a day, until you get relief. Mix it in juice to disguise the taste.

Graviola (*Annona muricata*) to Enhance Chemotherapy

Concoctions made from the leaves, stems, roots, and bark of the graviola tree—also called soursop—are among the traditional remedies used to treat cancer and other diseases in tropical regions. Taylor considers graviola to be a valuable aid in cancer care, not as a substitute for medical treatment but to enhance the effects of chemotherapy by killing drug-resistant cancer cells.

More than 200 chemical compounds have been identified in the plant. Lab and animal studies show that graviola can inhibit new cancer cells from growing and kill mutated cells that resist drugs. A chemo-enhancing dose could be 1 gram, taken 3 times daily.

"I believe the rainforest and its immense biodiversity and sheer number of plant chemicals hold the key to unlocking cures for devastating diseases," says Taylor. "And today, they provide highly effective remedies."

Rainforest Biodiversity

A 4-square-mile patch of rainforest—one-tenth the size of Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla.—can contain up to:

* 1,500 species of flowering plants
* 750 species of trees
* 400 species of birds
* 150 species of butterflies

For comparison, in the entire continental United States, there are only 679 native species of trees, according to a U.S. Forestry Service report.

For more information about the Amazon rainforest and its herbs, visit Taylor's plant database at www.rain-tree.com.

Herb Pharm Dragon's Blood | **NOW Double Strength Graviola** | **Whole World Botanicals Royal Chanca Piedra**

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How to Defeat Anxiety

Maintain your mental health and a positive attitude by keeping your whole self nourished and rested. Plus a simple exercise to help you regain your calm.

BY EMILY KANE, ND, LAC

Q: I feel a lot more anxious than I used to. I know the world is scarier and more divisive lately—the screen stimulation just never stops. What can I do to calm down?

A: You identified an important stressor over which you definitely have control: information overload. The solution? Reduce screen time. Put yourself on a "screen diet," especially at the end of the day. Just like you don't want to eat past, say, 8 p.m. (unless you have a very atypical schedule), part of your bedtime routine should include unplugging from screens. If you have a TV in your bedroom, reconsider this strategy for your overall health. Move it somewhere else, if possible, so it's less easy to binge-watch or zone out with a screen yakking at you.

Another way to unplug is to get outside and enjoy nature. We are creatures of the natural world, and a very unnatural world has built up around us. Try to find a place where beautiful trees are growing, and go there often. If possible, get barefoot during the day and connect with the magnificent harmonizing resonance of the earth's energy. The soil of the earth, which nourishes plant life, is analogous to the soil of your microbiome, which very much influences your mood and ultimately, your well-being.

The NEURO Path to Mental Health

Get excited about taking care of yourself. It's fun! Don't take on other optional projects until you have a good self-care routine locked in—good **N**utrition (make good food choices every day, whenever possible; this takes planning), regular **E**xercise, time to **U**nwind, commitment to **R**estorative sleep, and keeping your heart **O**pen to optimizing connections with people and nature.

I first heard this mnemonic—NEURO—on a brain-health series organized by Dr. David Perlmutter, and it really does cover all the bases when it comes to mental health. Because what's good for your whole-health is also good for your brain. Alzheimer's disease cannot be cured. There is zero effective medical treatment. The only feasible strategy is prevention. And before we're at risk for Alzheimer's, we're at risk for depression, anxiety, obsessive thinking or behaviors, blaming, shaming, and apathy.

Keeping your whole self nourished and rested is the best strategy for maintaining mental health and a positive attitude, even though you might have to go outside your comfort zone at times. People who always do exactly as they please, or disregard others' feelings, tend to be lonely. We are naturally social creatures, and we need to connect, authentically and kindly, with family, neighbors, co-workers, and even strangers.

Countdown to Calm

Meanwhile, here is a popular and simple technique to try when you feel things spinning out of control or the world seems unbearably dark. It's a way to stay grounded, stay present, de-escalate, and find that precious inner peace. As you can imagine, it starts with taking a nice deep breath. Even when you're in an aggravating situation, or in the presence of an irritating person, you can usually pause for a deep breath. So start there.

Next, tune into your sensory faculties. This technique is called 5-4-3-2-1, which may help you remember it more easily. The more you use this technique, the more success you will have. To begin, simply take a deep belly breath, and then:

Photo: Getty Images

1 Look—Look around for five things that you can see, and say them out loud if that feels comfortable. For example, you could say, "I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame." You can also just focus on five objects you see around you, one at a time, as a way to be connected to the here and now.

2 Feel—Pay attention to your body, think of four things that you can feel, and say them out loud (or just think about them). For example, you could say, "I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, I feel the chair I am sitting on."

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DR. KANE'S HAWAII RETREAT

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Kane invites you to join her **Annual Big Island Yummy Farm Fresh Food & Deep Stretching Retreat.** Visit dremilykane.com for more information.

3 Listen—Listen for three sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of your fingers typing on the keyboard, or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud, or just quietly pay attention to them. Try to focus all your attention on the sensory input during these anti-anxiety exercises.

4 Smell—Say or think about two things you can smell. If possible, you could move closer to a rosebush or open a jar of cinnamon. If you can't smell anything at the moment, or you can't move around, then just think about your two favorite smells, one at a time.

5 Taste—Say or imagine one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say or think about your favorite thing to taste.

Then take another deep belly breath to end. You'll feel calmer and more relaxed, and ready to take on whatever challenges need facing.

+ Find a licensed naturopathic doctor for a virtual (telemedicine) or in-person consultation at naturemed.org/find-an-nd.

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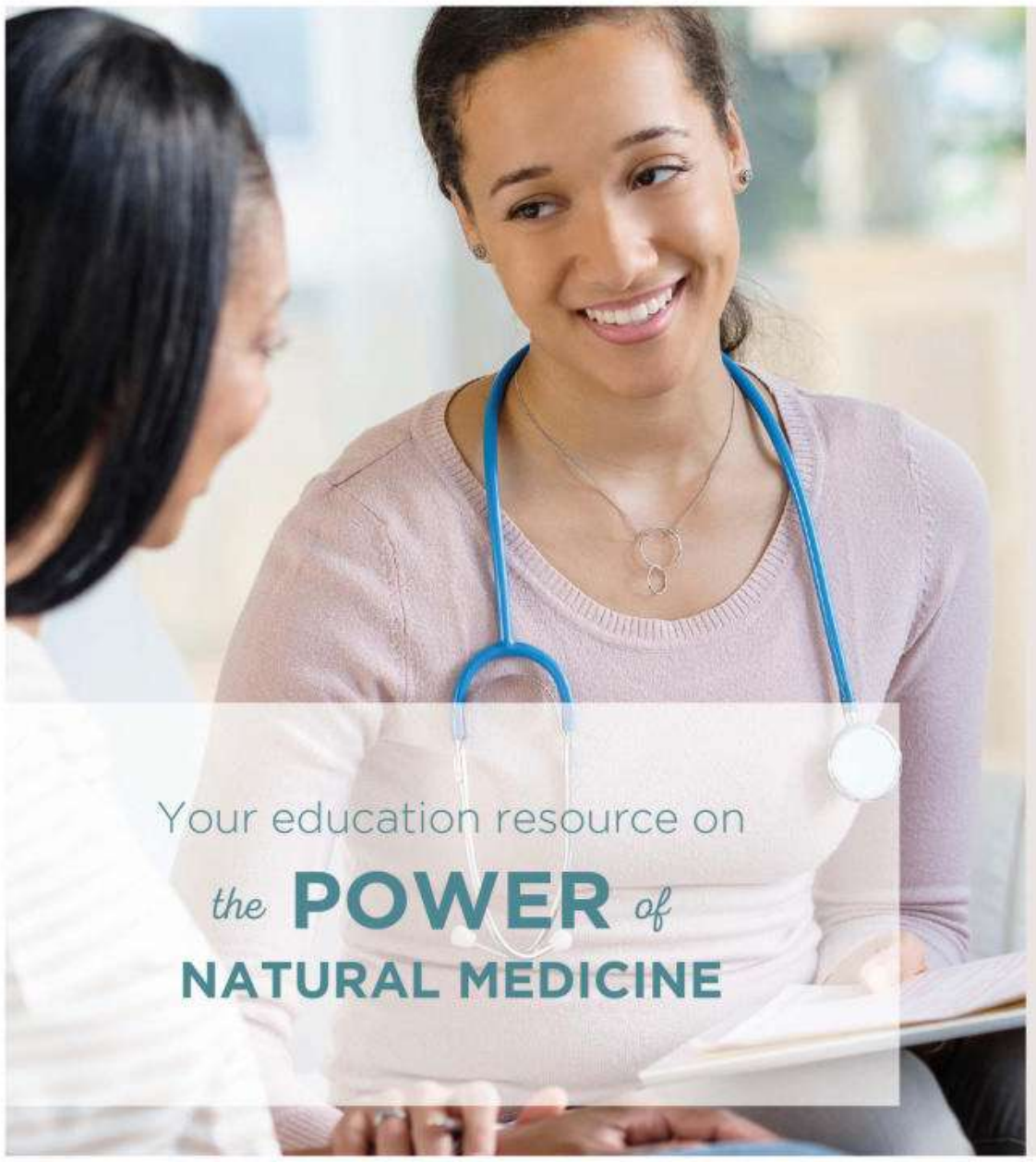

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Much Ado About Maca

This South American sensation is making its presence known as a world-class tonic that does just about everything.

BY KARTA PURKH SINGH KHALSA, DN-C, RH

Maca (*Lepidium meyenii*) is a member of the Brassica family that's a wonder of biological adaptability. It grows high in the Andes, where low temperatures and strong winds limit other crops. This hardy perennial, cultivated at altitudes of 11,000–14,500 feet, is the world's highest cultivated plant. With its extreme climate and poor-quality soil, the locale is some of the world's worst farmland, yet maca flourishes in this wasteland.

The medicinal part of the plant is its pear-shaped root, which is up to 3 inches in diameter and varies in color from yellow and red to black.

Traditional Uses Backed by Science

Maca has been used for centuries in folk medicine to treat infertility, low libido, male sexual performance, menopause symptoms, and menstrual disorders. In a study published in *Urology*, maca improved erectile dysfunction and increased libido. And a recent paper reported that maca was synergistic with Chinese chive seed, and that the combo impressively increased nitric oxide (NO), the same mechanism as Viagra. In addition to supporting the NO finding, a 2020 study found that maca benefits gut health, acting as a prebiotic.

Today, practitioners use the herb to treat a range of hormonal imbalances, from PMS, hot flashes, and depression to night sweats and vaginal dryness. Add to this list fatigue, brain fog, and anemia. An Australian randomized controlled trial says maca reduces symptoms of depression and improves diastolic blood pressure in postmenopausal women. The journal E*vidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* reports, in a double-blind placebo-controlled trial, that maca root succeeds as treatment for antidepressant-induced sexual dysfunction in women.

How Maca Works

Maca contains biologically active aromatic isothiocyanates that are thought to have aphrodisiac properties. Its effects on fertility are believed to be a result of glucosinolates. Maca is rich in sterols, the building blocks of sex hormones, and saponins, the same class of compounds as the active ingredients in ginseng.

Dried maca root is high in nutritional value, resembling cereal grains such as maize, rice, and wheat. It contains high levels of essential amino acids, and more iron and calcium than potatoes. And speaking of diet, interest is now turning to maca to treat obesity, supported by a 2021 study that showed that the herb reduces insulin levels.

How to Benefit from Maca

As a dietary supplement, maca is dried and encapsulated. Recommended doses are typically around 3,000 mg. per day, but as we can see from native use, the dose could safely be much higher. Maca powder is also available, so you could experiment with incorporating the herb into smoothies or other beverages.

Demand is creating an economic boom in Peru, where the government is encouraging farmers to use agricultural chemicals to increase yields. Maca is also now grown outside the Andes, such as in the Yunnan province in China. This likely affects the phytochemistry of the plant and thus the quality and safety of products made from it. For best—and safest—results, look for supplements made with maca that has been grown in the traditional way, high in the Andes and free from synthetic chemicals.

Bio Nutrition Maca-Max

Garden of Life *mykind* Organics Maca Root

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Magnesium for Healthy, Beautiful Skin

Do you need to relax after a stressful day? Are your muscles sore from a tough workout? Is your skin thirsty, sensitive, or breaking out? One simple mineral ingredient can provide relief—magnesium.

BY SHERRIE STRAUSFOGEL

For such a basic mineral, magnesium does a lot of work. It plays an important role in the nervous system by helping relieve anxiety, which in turn promotes better sleep. It supports healthy muscle function and helps relax muscles after a workout. And a magnesium bath can reduce inflammation, remove toxins and heavy metals at a cellular level, relieve stress and fatigue, improve circulation and blood flow, and ease joint pain.

Studies show that when used in skincare products, magnesium works by regulating cellular regeneration and repair, increasing recovery, and fighting infection. It helps soften and hydrate skin, shrink pores, and remove dirt, dead skin, and excess oils. It can help heal acne, soothe skin inflammation, and reduce fine lines and wrinkles around the eyes and mouth.

Magnesium chloride is one of the best forms of topical magnesium due to its purity, potency, and rapid absorption into the skin. You will find it in its purist form as bath flakes and salts, mixed with water to form oils and oil sprays, and in lotions and gels.

In skincare products, another magnesium compound is gaining popularity as an effective antioxidant. Magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is a stable derivative of vitamin C (L-ascorbic acid mono-dihydrogen phosphate magnesium salt). Unlike L-ascorbic acid, it is light and oxygen-stable, so it doesn't readily degrade in cosmetic formulas that contain water. Magnesium ascorbyl phosphate helps hydrate skin, balance excess oil, and calm sensitive skin.

Photo: Getty Images

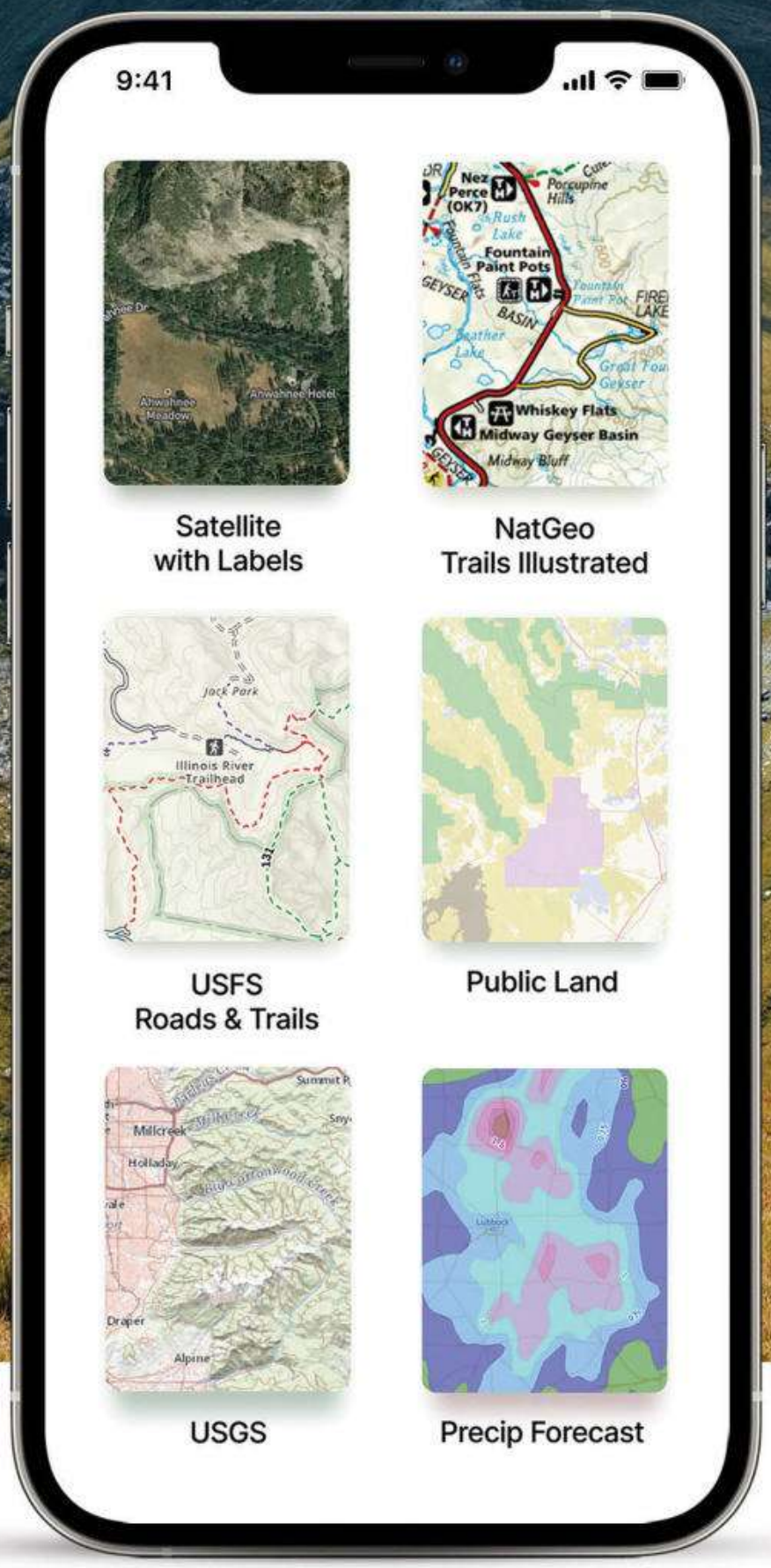
❶ Soothe your skin and reduce blemishes with **Trace Minerals Magnesium Gel.** This concentrated, non-greasy formula with 10 percent magnesium chloride plus skin softeners absorbs quickly to help keep skin looking and feeling healthy.

❷ Soak away stress and relax tight muscles in a warm bath—or soothe your aching tootsies when you've been on your feet too long—with **Life-flo Pure Magnesium Flakes.** These highly concentrated magnesium chloride crystals are sourced from the Netherlands' ancient Zechstein Seabed. Found deep beneath the earth's surface, the seabed offers pristine magnesium enriched with trace elements from ancient seawater.

❸ Ease stressed skin and tired muscles with **NOW Solutions Magnesium Topical Spray.** Also sourced from the ancient Zechstein Seabed, this highly concentrated solution of magnesium chloride and water has a slick, oily feel at first, but massages into skin easily. For a foot soak, pour one to two ounces of the solution into a basin of warm water.

❹ Revive skin while you sleep with **Pacifica Vegan Collagen Overnight Recovery Cream.** This rich cream is infused with fermented vegan collagen, sunflower seed oil, magnesium ascorbyl phosphate (vitamin C), and flower extracts of orange, jasmine, and chamomile to hydrate and nourish dry, stressed, or aging skin.

❺ Wake up to glowing skin with **Mad Hippie Triple C Night Cream**. Three bioactive forms of vitamin C, including magnesium ascorbyl phosphate, revitalize sun-damaged and aging skin. Potent antioxidants from Reishi mushroom, turmeric, and cloudberry fruit extracts in this silky cream protect skin from sun and other environmental damage while also hydrating and detoxifying. Safflower seed oil and shea butter boost your skin's moisture.



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6 Ways to Enjoy Pumpkin

Once reserved for Halloween and Thanksgiving dessert, pumpkin has become a perennial favorite in practically every way—from skincare to coffee to pancake mix. Here are five pumpkin-forward products to try, along with one super-tasty pumpkin bread recipe!

BY *BETTER NUTRITION* EDITORS

1 Get Your Granola On:

Gluten-free and naturally sweetened with coconut sugar, **Purely Elizabeth Pumpkin Cinnamon Granola** tastes like a bowl of cozy autumn goodness.

2 Make Pumpkin Pancakes & Waffles:

Made with real pumpkin and organic spices, **Simple Mills Pumpkin Pancake & Waffle Mix** uses almond flour to make a grain-free, Paleo-friendly batter.

3 Baby Your Skin:

Pumpkin seed oil is one of the key ingredients in **Mad Hippie Cleansing Oil**, which gently cleanses and removes makeup for softer, brighter skin.

4 Nourish Your Hair: Acure Ultra Hydrating Shampoo

pairs omega-rich pumpkin seed oil with hair-smoothing argan oil for super-soft, shiny hair. Try the conditioner too!

5 Supplement Your Diet: NOW

Pumpkin Seed Oil is rich in heart-healthy fats, minerals, and antioxidants, including anti-inflammatory polyphenols and carotenoids. Uses include prostate and urinary health and hair loss prevention.

6 Snack on a Freshly Baked Cake Loaf:

make it!

Pumpkin-Almond Butter Bread

Serves 8

You really can't have too many good pumpkin bread recipes—and this Paleo version doesn't disappoint! Almond butter keeps the bread moist and delectable.

¾ cup almond butter
2 large eggs
½ cup coconut sugar (or pure maple syrup)
½ cup plus 2 Tbs. pumpkin purée, fresh or canned
½ cup coconut oil, melted and cooled slightly
1½ tsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
½ cup arrowroot starch
3 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
½ tsp. ground ginger
2 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. sea salt

1. Grease and lightly flour (some arrowroot starch is fine for this) a standard 8x4½-inch loaf pan and preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In large bowl, combine almond butter, eggs, coconut sugar, pumpkin, coconut oil, lemon juice, and vanilla. Blend using hand mixer until smooth.
3. In medium bowl, whisk together arrowroot starch, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, baking powder, and salt. Add to wet ingredients and blend on low until fully incorporated and batter is smooth.
4. Pour into prepared loaf pan and bake 50–60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool in pan 10 minutes, remove from pan, and place on wire rack to cool completely before slicing and serving.

Per serving: 360 cal; 7g prot; 28g total fat (13g sat fat); 25g carb; 45mg chol; 270mg sod; 4g fiber; 11g sugar

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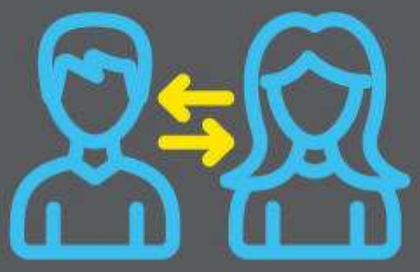

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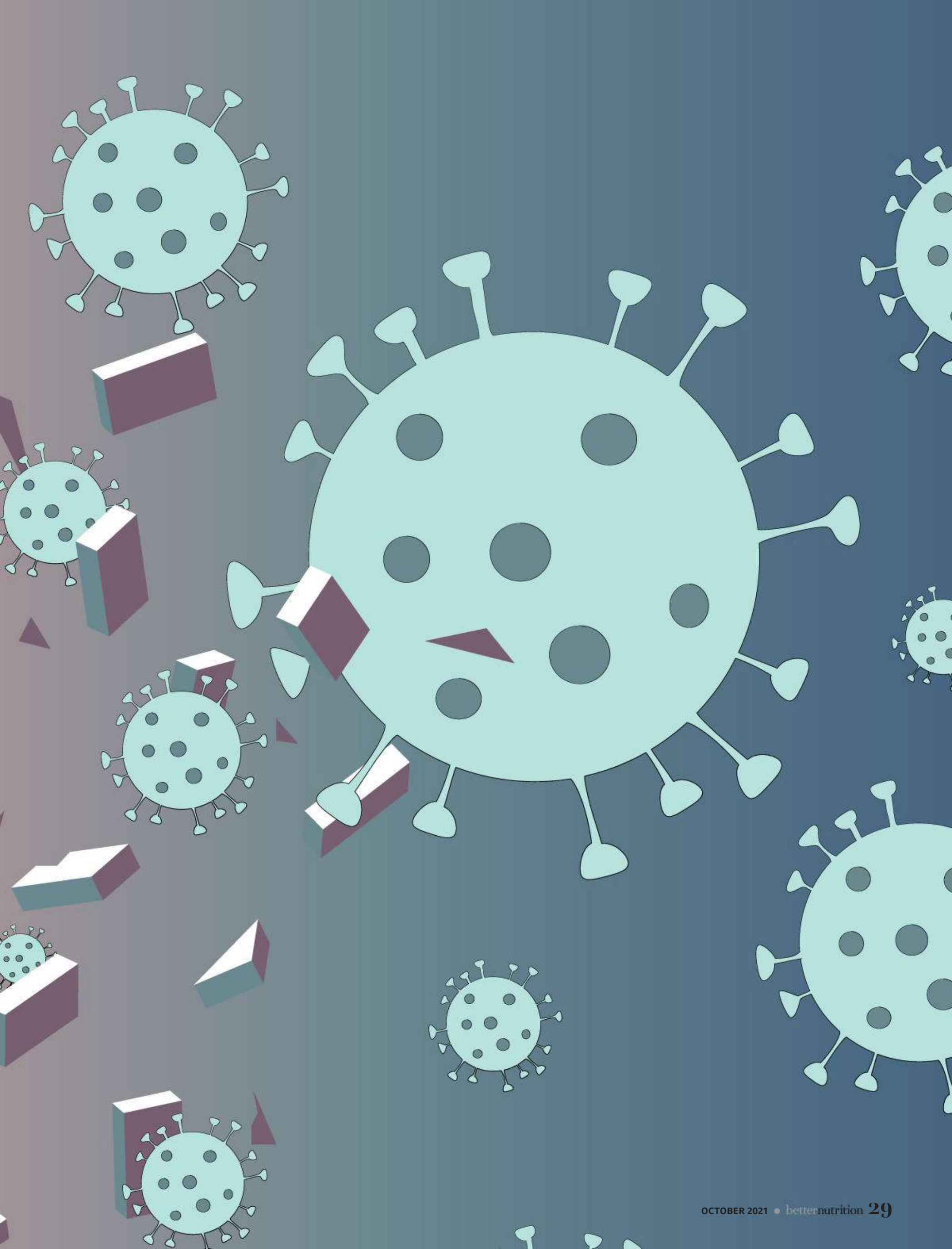
10 WAYS YOU'RE *SABOTAGING* YOUR *IMMUNE SYSTEM*

Never as a nation have we been more focused on immunity. But in spite of our best efforts, some all-too-common daily habits may be undermining our resistance to infection. **Here are 10 sneaky immune saboteurs, and ways to change them.**

BY LISA TURNER



1 AN OVERZEALOUS SUPPLEMENT ROUTINE. Mega-dosing on supplements to fight infections? Ultra-high doses of certain vitamins and minerals can impair your immune system. Selenium and zinc are known for their critical roles in immunity, but lavish doses of either hamper the body's immune response and diminish resistance. Excess vitamin A can shut down the body's trained immunity, increasing susceptibility to otherwise- benign pathogens. And taking handfuls of "immune-boosting" herbs and supplements can exacerbate existing autoimmune disease or trigger autoimmune conditions in genetically predisposed people.

For balanced support, eat a nutrient-dense diet and use supplements in recommended—not heroic—doses. Some to consider for immune health include vitamins C and D, zinc, elderberry, medicinal mushrooms, Korean ginseng, and Xlear Nasal Spray. (Xlear is technically not a supplement, but it has been shown to help block viruses from adhering in the nose and to keep mucous membranes moist.)

2 ISOLATION. After 18 months of social distancing, isolating may have become a way of life. If so, it's time to break that habit. Feeling lonely suppresses the body's virus-fighting mechanisms, and ongoing isolation is linked with sadness, depression, and diminished immunity. You don't have to become an overnight social butterfly. Small doses of human contact can boost resistance, and even hugging can lessen stress and improve immunity. And if you're in a relationship, regular intimacy increases levels of pathogen-fighting compounds—weekly sex seems to have the greatest effect.

3 WRONG FATS & PROTEIN RATIO. Keto and other low-carb plans offer plenty of benefits. But too much dietary fat—namely overly processed fats—may affect cellular immune responses and dampen resistance. Some research also shows that saturated fats from conventionally raised meat, butter, and cheese (not organic, grass-fed varieties) can disrupt gut bacteria, critical for a healthy immune response and resistance to pathogens. Heavy consumption of animal protein, especially conventionally raised red meat, can also disrupt the microbiome. The same goes for sugar alcohols commonly used in low-carb diets. If you're following a Keto diet, focus on clean fats and protein sources, and emphasize fiber to support beneficial gut bacteria. Also consider cutting back on sugar alcohols or using stevia or monk fruit instead.

4 WAY TOO MUCH TIME SPENT INDOORS. If you're still working from home—and getting about as much sunshine as the average vampire—it's time to head outside. Exposure to the sun's rays triggers vitamin D production, crucial for resistance to infection. In addition to boosting D, sunlight activates T cells that play a central role in human immunity. Plus, plants, trees ,and other green things produce compounds that appear to increase the number and activity of white blood cells. Just don't get too much sun—exposure to UV light (even enough for a mild sunburn) suppresses immune response. In the summer, 5–15 minutes of sunlight each day is enough. In the fall and winter, you may need more. Or cover your bases with a supplement—research suggests that 500 IU per day of oral vitamin D_3 is as effective as sunlight.

5 AN 80-HOUR WORK WEEK. Movers, shakers, and captains of industry might want to dial it down a notch. Chronic stress suppresses the immune system, decreasing protective cells and prompting inflammation. Some research shows that demanding, stressful careers have a measurable, detrimental impact on immune parameters, reducing natural killer cell activity and increasing markers of inflammation. The effect is even more pronounced if you're dissatisfied with your job. Any sources of stress (tense relationships, financial woes, or a high-anxiety lifestyle) can have the same consequences. And ongoing anxiety disrupts gut bacteria, reducing overall diversity and harming immunity. If you need to tone it down, stress-busting supplements like L-theanine, valerian, and lemon balm can help.

6 FIERCE WORKOUTS. Exercise is generally good for immunity. Regular physical activity activates the immune system's pathogen-fighting potential, and studies show that a couch-potato lifestyle significantly diminishes the body's ability to ward off infection. But strenuous or excessive workouts can backfire. Overtraining without alternating rest and recovery can impair immune function, and research suggests that prolonged, intensive bouts of training can increase the risk of infections, especially of the upper respiratory tract. So exercise, but be balanced. Shoot for 30–60 minutes a day of moderate-intensity activities, and give yourself time to rest between rigorous workouts.

Photo: Getty Images

7 EXCESS ALCOHOL. The occasional happy hour cocktail probably won't hurt—but regular, heavy drinking promotes inflammation and hampers the body's defenses. Alcohol is broken down into acetaldehyde, a toxic compound that interferes with immune-cell activity and with the lungs' ability to sweep out bacteria and viruses. In fact, one night of excessive drinking can significantly impact immunity. Alcohol also disrupts gut bacteria, further lowering resistance. It's even worse if your nightly party routine includes smoking or vaping. Nicotine weakens the body's pathogen- fighting potential, and chemicals in e-cigarettes impair immune responses to bacteria and viruses and can damage lungs, making them more vulnerable to infection (smoking pot also harms the respiratory system and impacts immunity). Put your party animal back in its cage, drink alcohol in moderation, and if you smoke or vape, stop now.

8 BEING TOO CLEAN. Good hygiene is vital for preventing the spread of colds and flu—but obsessively disinfecting every doorknob, counter, and light switch can backfire. Some research suggests that an over-sterile environment confuses the immune system and increases the risk of allergies and autoimmune conditions. That's especially important if you have kids, who rely on exposure to the occasional germ to develop robust immunity. And scrubbing your whole body with antibacterial soaps and washes disrupts beneficial skin bacteria responsible for fending off harmful organisms. Just keep your home normally clean, wash your hands frequently with regular soap, and minimize contact with anyone who's sick. And if there's ever a time to unleash your inner OCD, it's with your cell phone. Some studies suggest that the average mobile device is 10 times more germy than a toilet seat.

9 ICE CREAM (AND COOKIES, AND PEANUT BUTTER CUPS). That quarantine-inspired sugar addiction may be harming your immune system. Sweet treats boost the body's release of pro-inflammatory compounds and impair immunity, and some research shows that sugar significantly decreases the capacity of infection-fighting cells for at least five hours. Honey, agave nectar, and other natural alternatives have the same effects. So curb your sweet tooth. Make cookies and cakes an occasional treat, not an everyday event, and swap sugar for stevia and monk fruit. Some studies suggest that stevia enhances the body's immune response, and compounds in monk fruit promote immune cell proliferation.

10 LATE-NIGHT NETFLIX BINGES. If you're staying up past midnight to watch just one more episode of that gripping series, you may be lowering your resistance. Exposure to blue light from televisions, tablets, and other devices seriously disturbs restful sleep—important, since your body releases pathogen-fighting cells during slumber, and research links lack of sleep with increased susceptibility to infection. In one study, people who got less than seven hours of shut-eye were nearly three times more likely to catch a cold, and even two nights of sleep deprivation disrupts gut bacteria involved in immune function. Turn off the TV, make a cup of chamomile tea, and unwind before bed. And if you struggle with sleep, try melatonin. Besides supporting slumber, it enhances resistance to viral infections.

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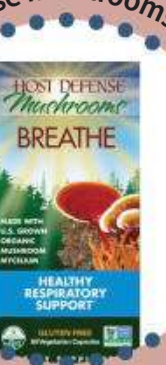
Host Defense Mushrooms Breathe



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SOWING YOUR OATS

From milk to ice cream, oat-based products are popping up everywhere in the grocery store these days. But are they really the secret to dairy-free bliss?

BY MATTHEW KADEY, MS, RD

Whether your tummy can't handle lactose, you're looking to steer clear of animal-derived products, or you just want more variety in your diet, there's a milk alternative to fit every need (pea milk, anyone?). A Packaged Facts report finds that Americans are drinking two fewer glasses of cow's milk per week than in years past, and plant-based alternatives are picking up the slack.

The latest "milk" taking the U.S. by storm is made from oats, with proponents claiming that its fuller flavor is perfect for scratching that dairy itch. And just when you were getting used to adding oat milk to your morning brew or post-workout smoothies, the latest oat-based innovations are already available in the dairy and freezer aisles. Here's how these not-milk products stack up.

Oat Milk

This newer kid on the "milk" block is made from whole oats that are soaked in water, blended, and then strained, with an end result that is naturally sweet and deliciously creamy because the grains absorb more water than nuts might. With a mouthfeel closer to the real thing than most milk alternatives, it doesn't feel like you're drinking watered-down results. That makes it great to add to everything from coffee to baking. (Pro tip: It steams well if you'd like to use it in lattes or cappuccinos, much to the delight of baristas.)

While it doesn't stack up to dairy milk or soy milk in terms of protein, oat milk features more than nut milks (including almond)—about 3–4 grams per cup. Plus, it has 2 grams of fiber, including cholesterol-busting beta-glucan.

On the downside, it's also quite a bit higher in carbohydrates than nut milks—around 15–25 grams per cup depending on the brand. If you're restricting carbohydrates in your diet (hello, keto) then oat milk may not be your best option.

Some varieties are fortified and may contain nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, and vitamin B_{12}. But it's hard to know whether these are as beneficial as nutrients from naturally occurring sources. As long as you're getting those nutrients somewhere in your diet, you don't really need them in your milk.

Allergy-wise, oat milk is nut-free, soy-free, and (obviously) dairy-free, so it's safe for people with these sensitivities. Although oats themselves contain no gluten, cross-contamination can be an issue. If you have celiac disease or are otherwise gluten intolerant, be sure to seek a brand that is certified gluten-free.

As is the case with other non-dairy milks, there's likely to be a lot more in your oat milk than just oats. Manufacturers add varying amounts of sugar, thickeners, emulsifiers, and other flavoring agents. Choose unsweetened varieties to keep your sugar intake in check, and look for brands with simple ingredients lists to avoid a lot of unnecessary fillers.

OUR PICK: Elmhurst Unsweetened Milked Oats

Photo: Getty Images

Oat Milk Yogurt

Take oat milk, inoculate it with live cultures, and—boom!—you've got an excellent plant-based yogurt alternative with all the tang you'd expect from the real thing with a much smaller environmental footprint.

"Oatgurt" can help fertilize your gut with beneficial microorganisms for a more robust microbiome that may contribute to improved digestive, immune, and brain health. Just keep in mind that most brands contain only about 3 grams of protein per cup—roughly one-fifth the protein in the same amount of Greek yogurt—so they won't be as satiating, and you'll have to make up for this protein shortfall elsewhere in your diet.

Some, but not all, brands are fortified with nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin B_{12}. Sadly, it can be a nearly Sisyphean challenge to find plain versions of oat milk yogurt, with flavored options delivering 10–15 grams of added sugar in a serving. Since eating too many extra sugars has been linked to everything from depression to impaired immunity, be sure to trim your intake of the added sweet stuff elsewhere if you enjoy spooning up fruit-flavored or vanilla oat yogurt.

OUR PICK: Hälsa Mango Oatgurt

Oat Milk Ice Cream

While it's far from the first dairy-free option available, oat ice cream is generating quite a buzz as the best no-moo brain freeze available. It's made by taking oat milk and churning it with other ingredients such as cane sugar, coconut oil, and emulsifiers such as guar gum.

When it comes to dairy-free ice cream, most people don't expect it to be a strong copycat of cookie dough Ben & Jerry's, but the oat variety has become the exception. The first thing to know about rich-tasting oat-based ice cream is that it's typically creamy right out of the freezer. No need to leave it out to thaw for several impatient minutes like many other vegan ice creams, and there's no icy mouthfeel. Secondly, it's now available in tempting flavors ranging from s'mores to mint fudge to salted caramel, none of which taste like porridge.

So grab a spoon, knowing that oat ice cream is an indulgence, not a superfood. It can be surprisingly comparable to regular ice cream when it comes to calories, sugar, and saturated fat, but with fewer grams of protein. A ²/₃ cup serving (yes, a serving is not a whole pint!) of oat ice cream can deliver as much as 20 grams of added sugar, certainly no less than what you typically find in the regular stuff.

The upshot is that if you're in the dairy-free camp, oat ice cream is a delicious treat option, but it should be enjoyed as just that—an occasional splurge.

OUR PICK: Planet Oat Coffee Fudge Swirl Non-Dairy Frozen Dessert.

Mayan Chocolate Pudding

Serves 4

Topping options for this healthy dessert range from berries and chopped nuts to cacao nibs and coconut chips.

⅓ cup unsweetened oat milk
1½ cups vanilla oat yogurt
1 avocado
1 ripe banana
⅓ cup cocoa powder
2 Tbs. honey or pure maple syrup
1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. cayenne
⅛ tsp. salt

Place oat milk, yogurt, avocado, banana, cocoa powder, honey, cinnamon, cayenne, and salt in blender or food processor, and blend until smooth. Chill at least 1 hour.

Per serving: 220 cal; 6g prot; 10g total fat (2g sat fat); 34g carb; 0mg chol; 85mg sod; 8g fiber; 17g sugar

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Golden Overnight Oats

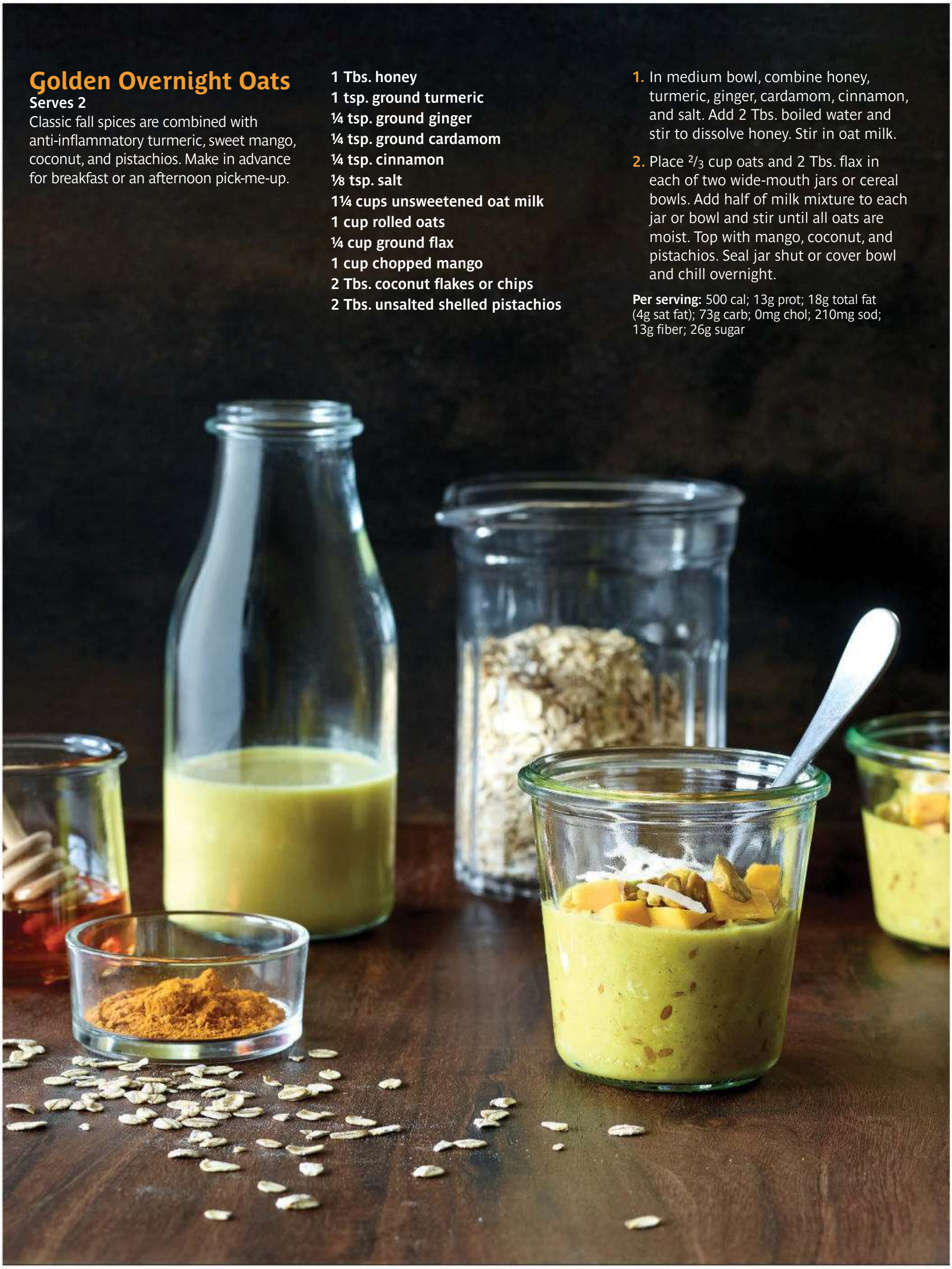
Serves 2

Classic fall spices are combined with anti-inflammatory turmeric, sweet mango, coconut, and pistachios. Make in advance for breakfast or an afternoon pick-me-up.

1 Tbs. honey
1 tsp. ground turmeric
¼ tsp. ground ginger
¼ tsp. ground cardamom
¼ tsp. cinnamon
⅛ tsp. salt
1¼ cups unsweetened oat milk
1 cup rolled oats
¼ cup ground flax
1 cup chopped mango
2 Tbs. coconut flakes or chips
2 Tbs. unsalted shelled pistachios

1. In medium bowl, combine honey, turmeric, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, and salt. Add 2 Tbs. boiled water and stir to dissolve honey. Stir in oat milk.
2. Place ⅔ cup oats and 2 Tbs. flax in each of two wide-mouth jars or cereal bowls. Add half of milk mixture to each jar or bowl and stir until all oats are moist. Top with mango, coconut, and pistachios. Seal jar shut or cover bowl and chill overnight.

Per serving: 500 cal; 13g prot; 18g total fat (4g sat fat); 73g carb; 0mg chol; 210mg sod; 13g fiber; 26g sugar



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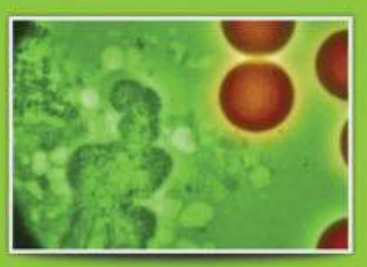
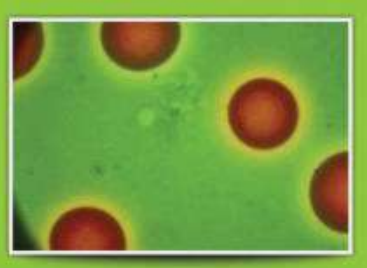


Blood Sample Before Syntol
High amounts of yeast in the blood. Subject suffers from fatigue and digestive issues.*



Blood Sample After Syntol
Normal yeast levels. Subject indicated energy levels are at a ten year high and digestion returned to normal.*

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The Growing Problem of Toxic Food

In a new book, an MIT scientist sounds the alarm about the health-degrading effects of a common weed killer used on many of the crops we eat—and shares tips on how to protect ourselves.

BY MELISSA DIANE SMITH

Q: I used to spray Roundup on weeds in my yard, but I stopped doing that a few years ago after I learned about people who developed cancer after using it. I thought I was protected from exposure, but I've since heard from several sources that this chemical is used on many foods that we eat. What can I do?

A: One by one, people are waking up to the far-reaching problem of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, in our environment and food supply. "I believe that glyphosate is the most dangerous environmental chemical we face today due to its unique mechanism of toxicity, careless application, and pervasive presence," writes Stephanie Seneff, PhD, an MIT senior research scientist, in her new book, *Toxic Legacy*. After close to a decade of research on the chemical, Seneff outlines how glyphosate is eroding human health in numerous ways.

Not using glyphosate-based weed killers is the first step toward protecting yourself, but the far trickier step is to avoid indirect or hidden sources of glyphosate, especially in the foods we eat.

The Alarming Rise in Glyphosate Use

It's hard for many of us to grasp that glyphosate's use has increased 300-fold since it was introduced in 1974. It particularly skyrocketed after the introduction of herbicide-resistant, Roundup Ready genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in 1996, but glyphosate is not just sprayed on GMO crops. It's also used as a pre-harvest drying agent on non-GMO crops such as wheat, oats, and legumes. Surprisingly, the highest levels of glyphosate have consistently been found in these non-GMO foods.

Today nearly 150,000 tons of glyphosate are sprayed onto American crops each year—the equivalent of one pound of

Photo: Getty Images

Seek Out These Food Labels

To help you avoid glyphosate in and on foods that you buy, look for these labels.

USDA ORGANIC

By law, glyphosate and other synthetic chemical pesticides, along with synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and GMOs, cannot be used in the production of certified organic crops. Even though glyphosate is pervasive in our environment and can drift onto organic crops through wind or rain, research shows that people who eat a predominantly organic diet have significantly less glyphosate in their urine than people who consume mostly conventional foods.

REGENERATIVE ORGANIC CERTIFIED

Products that meet Regenerative Organic Certified (ROC) standards must first hold USDA organic certification, which means crops are not sprayed with glyphosate. ROC then adds further criteria to ensure soil health, pasture-based animal welfare, and social fairness for farmworkers.

Products that display the Regenerative Organic Certified label include Dr. Bronner's Regenerative Organic Coconut Oil, Nature's Path Oats, Patagonia Provisions Regenerative Organic fruit snacks, and Lotus Foods Brown and White Basmati Rice.

Learn more about this certification at Regenorganic.org.

GLYPHOSATE RESIDUE FREE

Products bearing the Glyphosate Residue Free label contain no glyphosate, meaning they're at the bottom limit of detection for the chemical in laboratories, 10 parts per billion. The products are tested by an accredited laboratory at least three times per year, providing extra assurance against glyphosate exposure in foods that consumers buy.

This certification is one of the fastest-growing in the United States, according to Harry Rowlands, director of The Detox Project, an organization that launched the food label in 2018 to create transparency within the food industry, specifically regarding pesticides.

More than 70 food and supplement brands and 1,500 products have been certified, including Chosen Foods oils and mayo, Nutiva oils and seeds, White Leaf baby food, Kettle & Fire bone broth, Soozy's Grain-Free baked goods, Jovial Foods grain products, Uncle Matt's juices, Heavenly Organics chocolates, and MegaFood supplements. You can learn more about the products that have this label at detoxproject.org.

glyphosate per year for every person in the United States.

Health Problems from Glyphosate

Glyphosate wasn't on Seneff's radar for the first 64 years of her life, but since September 2012, she has worked tirelessly to understand the chemical and its effects on our health. The following are key points from her book:

Cancer: Excessive DNA damage is a precursor to cancer, and human liver cells and human white blood cells exposed to glyphosate suffer DNA damage. Cancer can take a long time to develop, and the scientific literature points to glyphosate being carcinogenic, "priming the body to fall prey to cancer," she writes.

Liver damage: A large number of studies have demonstrated that glyphosate is markedly toxic to the liver, and that the liver is one of first organs to be affected by glyphosate exposure. This isn't surprising because it's the liver's responsibility to clear toxins from the blood. Research reveals that glyphosate depletes the liver of glutathione, induces oxidative stress (which can lead to DNA damage), and causes fatty liver disease.

Harming the gut microbiome: Glyphosate, which was patented as an antimicrobial, is also hurting our guts. It preferentially kills the species of bacteria that we need the most, such as *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacteria*. These microorganisms help our bodies perform many functions, including digesting food and synthesizing chemicals that affect learning, memory, and mood. When glyphosate destroys beneficial bacteria, harmful disease-causing bacteria and fungi can thrive. Alterations in microbes in the gut are associated with many different conditions—not only digestive problems but also depression and other mental disorders, autoimmune diseases, and Parkinson's disease.

Mineral deficiencies: Glyphosate is a chelating agent, which means it binds tightly to metal ions. The chelation action of the weed killer disrupts a plant's uptake of essential minerals from the soil—including zinc, copper, manganese, magnesium, cobalt, and iron—which leads to mineral-deficient plants. When we eat these plants, we can become deficient in minerals too.

Seneff also writes that glyphosate impairs the body's ability to maintain adequate sulfate supplies. Sulfate is critical for escorting hormones through the bloodstream, deactivating toxic compounds, shuttling them out of the body, and controlling what goes into and what stays out of most cells in the body.

Hormone and reproductive issues: A review paper published in 2020 found that glyphosate exhibits eight of 10 key characteristics of an endocrine disruptor. It has been found to disrupt thyroid hormone regulation, suppress testosterone synthesis, and inhibit an enzyme critical for conversion of testosterone to estrogen. Exposure to glyphosate is linked to reproductive disorders, including fertility problems in adults and birth defects in

children. And according to Seneff, the most devastating effects don't appear until subsequent generations.

Taking Action

Once you understand the magnitude and severity of the glyphosate problem, it's easy to be overwhelmed. But take heart: As more people become educated about glyphosate, the more they're taking effective action. After hundreds of thousands of concerned citizens joined the Environmental Working Group's campaign to get glyphosate out of our food, Kellogg's announced plans to end the pre-harvest use of glyphosate in all of its crops by the end of 2025. Many other people are joining collective efforts to ban the use of glyphosate, which Seneff says is imperative.

On an individual basis, our food purchases can make a world of difference. Seek out certified organic food or buy real food grown by local farmers who you know do not use glyphosate or other synthetic pesticides. You also can choose products with the Glyphosate Residue Free Label. (See "Seek Out These Food Labels," p. 39.) Even if you've been exposed in the past, the body has an amazing ability to heal itself when you simply remove hazardous substances. So start today! Other tips Seneff recommends in *Toxic Legacy* include:

Savor sulfur: Because it's important for detoxification, eat lots of sulfur-containing foods such as grass-fed beef, fish, eggs, cheese, onions, leeks, garlic, and cruciferous vegetables. Or consider taking sulfur-containing supplements, such as alpha-lipoic acid, chondroitin sulfate, glucosamine sulfate, MSM, SAMe, liposomal glutathione, taurine, or Aged Garlic Extract. Better yet, soak in Epsom salts to absorb sulfate through the skin and bypass sulfur metabolism in the gut, which can be uncomfortable when our bodies have chronic glyphosate exposure.

Heal the gut with pre- and probiotics: Prebiotics are nondigestible plant fibers that are fermented by the beneficial bacteria that live in our intestines. Seneff advises eating foods high in prebiotics, including asparagus, artichokes, bananas, dandelion greens, garlic, leeks, and onions.

Probiotics are living bacteria that promote human health. You can obtain probiotics by eating naturally fermented foods such as sauerkraut and yogurt, or by taking probiotic supplements.

Eat your antioxidants and polyphenols: To help protect your cells from damage by glyphosate and other toxic chemicals, emphasize food sources of glutathione, vitamin C, and polyphenols. Foods rich in glutathione include asparagus, avocados, okra, and spinach. Good food sources of vitamin C, which will reduce your need for glutathione, include citrus fruits, broccoli, kale, and Brussels sprouts. Foods that contain polyphenols—micronutrients produced by plants to protect themselves against disease, infection, and damage—include many fruits, vegetables, herbs, tea, and coffee.

Don't forget the minerals: Keeping in mind that glyphosate is a major metal chelator, particularly for iron, magnesium, manganese, cobalt, copper, and zinc, consider taking a multiple mineral supplement—or eat mineral-rich foods, such as bone broth, seafood, eggs, and organ meats to boost your intake.

Toxic Legacy

Written by MIT scientist Stephanie Seneff, PhD, *Toxic Legacy* is an exposé of the world's most common weed killer, glyphosate, and its role in skyrocketing rates of chronic diseases, including cancer, liver disease, and more.

The book also is a call to action. "This issue is too important to ignore," Seneff writes. "We need to ban glyphosate worldwide. Now."

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Intermittent Fasting, Decoded

What it is, why it works, and how to do it safely.

BY LISA TURNER

You've heard about intermittent fasting for weight loss, blood sugar control, and other health benefits. And it's not just the latest in a long line of fad diets. Research shows that periodic fasting encourages weight loss (especially reductions in belly fat) and, done the right way, protects against disease, improves overall health, and enhances longevity. When done poorly, however, intermittent fasting can leave you dehydrated, fatigued, and lacking in vital nutrients. Here's what you need to know, and how to do it safely.

The Basics

Intermittent fasting is an eating routine that restricts or eliminates daily food consumption to a specific window of time in a very specific pattern. It's nothing new. Fasting has been used by various cultures throughout history for therapeutic and spiritual purposes. And in primitive times, humans didn't have 24/7 access to food and were forced to fast, sometimes for days. As a result, our bodies evolved to survive—and thrive—without eating for extended periods of time. So in spite of our obsession with food, we humans can function well, and benefit greatly, from periodic fasting.

Because it naturally restricts calories (unless you binge during your eating periods), intermittent fasting encourages weight loss. Abstaining from food also prompts physiological changes that boost metabolism, making stored body fat more accessible and promoting weight loss—especially in the abdominal area—while retaining lean muscle. Studies show that periodic fasting can often lead to significant decreases in weight and body fat, with less muscle loss than standard calorie-restricted diets, and, in some studies, as much as a 7 percent reduction in waist circumference (belly fat).

But it's not just for weight loss. Fasting also initiates physiological processes associated with protection from disease and enhanced lifespan. Research shows that fasting impacts the expression of genes associated with longevity and triggers cellular repair processes, including autophagy, in which damaged cells are cleaned out, and new, healthier cells are regenerated. Abstaining from food also inhibits the release of pro-inflammatory cells, lowering inflammation and improving chronic inflammatory diseases.

The result: studies show that intermittent fasting improves metabolic health, lowers the risk of diabetes, enhances cognitive health, and protects against heart disease, cancer, dementia, and other chronic illnesses. And some research suggests that it may even extend lifespan, helping you live longer and better.

How to Do It Right

Because intermittent fasting is less a diet and more an ongoing way of eating, there aren't a lot of rules. It's super-flexible, allowing a wide variety of foods without counting calories. It can easily accommodate specific eating plans—vegan, gluten-free, low-carb, low-FODMAP, Keto, or any diet designed for food sensitivities. And the "eat, don't eat" pattern can be tailored to fit your lifestyle. The most common approach: daily, time-restricted eating, in which you limit food consumption to a set number of hours within a 24-hour period. For example, with the 16/8 plan, you might finish dinner at 7 p.m. and then have your next meal at 11 a.m. the next day—so you're consuming food for 8 hours, fasting for 16. But you'll find plenty of variations on that basic cycle. The Circadian Rhythm diet, designed to align periods of eating with the body's internal clock, involves fasting from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. The "every other day" routine involves alternate-day eating, in

Photo: Getty Images

Photo: Pornchai Mittongtare; Prop Styling: Robin Turk; Food Styling: Claire Stancer

make it!

Sheet Pan Chicken & Vegetables with Black Olives and Basil

Serves 6

This nutrient-packed sheet pan roast is easy to make and classier than a casserole. We used colorful, Keto-friendly vegetables, but you can sub any nutrient-dense options. Instead of chicken, use sliced sausage, or add shrimp during the last 5 minutes of cooking. Or swap cubed tempeh for the chicken and omit the cheese for a vegan-friendly option.

2 cups broccoli florets
2 cups cauliflower florets
1 cup thickly sliced portobello mushrooms
1 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch chunks
1 large yellow or orange bell pepper, cored and chopped
1 small red onion, coarsely chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
1½ lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
4 Tbs. olive oil
½ tsp. red pepper flakes, or to taste
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cup finely shredded baby spinach leaves
½ cup pitted black or Kalamata olives
¼ cup fresh basil, shredded
Shredded Asiago or Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In large bowl, combine broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, zucchini, bell pepper, onions, garlic, and chicken. Drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Toss to mix.
2. Transfer to large, rimmed baking sheet and spread out in single layer. Roast until vegetables are just tender, about 15 minutes. Remove pan from oven and stir vegetables. Sprinkle with cherry tomatoes, spinach, and olives, and toss to mix well. Roast 5 minutes more, until tomatoes are soft, and chicken is cooked through.
3. Remove pan from oven and transfer to a serving dish. Sprinkle with basil and cheese, and serve immediately.

Per serving: 280 cal; 25g prot; 15g total fat (3g sat fat); 10g carb; 105mg chol; 220mg sod; 3g fiber; 4g sugar

**Visit betternutrition.com for Karen Fischer's Cashew Cream dressing recipe.*

which you abstain from food every other day, and eat normally on non-fasting days. And other regimens limit, rather than eliminate, food. On the 5:2 plan, for example, you'd restrict food to around 500 calories for two, non-consecutive days of the week, and eat normally the rest of the time.

And that's the tricky part: eating "normally." Because there are no restrictions on what or how much you eat, you may be tempted to binge on sugary, processed, high-calorie treats—especially if you haven't eaten for 16 hours or longer. So, if your intermittent fasting plan looks like starving yourself, then stuffing your face with ice cream and potato chips, you probably won't lose weight. And worse, you'll come up short on vital nutrients.

Getting Started

If you do it right, intermittent fasting can be a lifelong regimen. But it's not for everyone. If you're prone to bingeing, pregnant, or have an eating disorder or certain other conditions, it may not be right for you. Check with your health care provider before you start.

To do intermittent fasting safely, follow these simple tips:

* Make the most of your eating periods—boost nutrient intake with clean, unprocessed foods, and steer clear of empty calories.
* Before you start, purge your kitchen of refined, packaged, processed foods and restock with clean, nutrient-dense foods.
* Emphasize vegetables, fruits, and lean proteins.
* If you eat grains, choose only whole, unprocessed versions.
* Include nutritious fats such as nuts, seeds, olives, and coconut oil.
* Stay hydrated. Stock up on sparkling water, green tea, and unsweetened flavored waters to encourage you to drink more.
* Start slowly. Begin by restricting food for 8–10 hours, then gradually increase fasting time by an hour or two a week.

Fresh Marinara Sauce in Minutes

If you have five minutes, then you have time to make this no-stir, no-simmer, über-healthy tomato sauce.

BY JONNY BOWDEN, PHD, CNS, AND JEANNETTE BESSINGER, CHHC

There's a whole lot to love about Mediterranean eating. Exhibit A: marinara sauce. This underappreciated staple of Italian cuisine is actually one of the most nutritious sauces you can put on your food, and it's one of the reasons pizza, when it's made with the right ingredients, can be a health food. After all, what's not to like about tomatoes, vegetables, garlic, olive oil, and fresh seasonings? You almost feel healthier just reading the list of ingredients! Antioxidants and anti-inflammatories abound, topped off by my personal choice for the ultimate medicinal food—olive oil!

Now here's the beauty part. Ordinarily, the only downside of homemade marinara sauce is the amount of time it takes to make. Usually, you have to simmer it for hours. But not with this recipe. Chef Jeannette has opted for blending the ingredients in a high-power blender or food processor, which cuts the prep time from hours to minutes and produces an incredibly nutrient-rich blended sauce. It's worth noting that the sauce is essentially raw as opposed to cooked. While a slow-cooked sauce is also wonderfully healthy, most of us don't get enough raw foods in our diets, and this is a great way to correct that omission!

FEATURED INGREDIENT

Tomatoes

Before we get to how great tomatoes are for you, let's settle one thing: Are tomatoes a fruit or a vegetable? Actually, they're both. Botanically speaking, the tomato is a fruit. But as a practical matter, everyone uses tomatoes as a vegetable. So, in 1893, the U.S. Supreme Court settled the matter and ruled that the tomato is to be classified legally as a vegetable, botany be darned.

Whatever you call them, tomatoes are loaded with vitamins and antioxidants, but the superstar of the bunch is a member of the carotenoid family known as lycopene.

CUT YOUR CANCER RISK

Research shows that lycopene is associated with significant reduction in prostate cancer risk. In 1995, the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* published a study conducted by Harvard University researchers looking at the eating habits of more than 47,000 men between 40 and 75. They found that those eating 10 servings or more a week of tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato juice, and even pizza had 45 percent fewer prostate cancers than men who ate fewer than two servings a week.

Evidence indicates that lycopene also protects against lung and stomach cancers, and preliminary research shows protection against pancreatic, oral, colorectal, breast, and cervical cancers. Lycopene also protects the heart against oxidative damage. And a study published in the *American Heart Journal* showed that treatment with tomato extract can reduce blood pressure.

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TOMATOES

The anticancer properties of lycopene are especially beneficial when consumed with fatty foods, such as avocado. Why? Because carotenoids are fat-soluble nutrients. To get maximum absorption, you need to eat them with a little fat. My favorites for tomato-based dishes or salads are either extra virgin olive oil or Malaysian palm oil.

Besides lycopene, tomatoes contain a variety of other powerful phytochemicals, including lutein—also found in the retina of our eyes and necessary for healthy vision. The lutein in tomatoes may help prevent macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness in older adults, and may help improve vision. Lutein may also help prevent or slow the thickening of arteries known as atherosclerosis.

Photo: Getty Images

make it!

5-Minute Marinara Sauce

Serves 4

Toss this fresh, flavor-rich sauce with hot pasta. For a low-carb, nutrient-dense "pasta" meal, pour sauce over lightly steamed veggie "noodles" such as hearts of palm pasta, spiralized zucchini, or roasted spaghetti squash.

1½ cups chopped and seeded heirloom tomatoes
½ cup loosely packed sundried tomato strips in oil, drained
½ cup chopped red bell pepper
⅓ cup shredded carrots
¼ cup chopped shallot
¼ cup packed fresh basil leaves
2 small cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed
1 Tbs. Italian seasoning
½ tsp. sea salt, or more, to taste
¼ tsp. red pepper flakes, optional
1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp. balsamic vinegar

Combine all ingredients in the order listed in high-speed blender and purée until smooth, scraping down the sides as necessary. Taste and adjust seasonings as necessary.

Per serving: 90 cal; 2g prot; 6g total fat (1g sat fat); 11g carb; 0mg chol; 340mg sod; 3g fiber; 4g sugar

Notes from the Clean Food Coach

Seeding the tomatoes reduces the total liquid content, which is important because puréed fresh veggies tend to release a lot of water, and you don't want a runny sauce. You can quarter the tomatoes and push the seeds out with clean hands or scoop them out with a teaspoon.

Photo: Getty Images

Blue Hill Co-op

Blue Hill Co-op in Blue Hill, Maine, began in the winter of 1974 as a buying club formed by a handful of locals looking to bring better food options to their community. Over the past 47 years, the Co-op has had several homes—from members' own homes to the first retail space run entirely by volunteers to a central location on Ellsworth Rd. In the mid-1990s, the latter became a community hub for the peninsula for many years.

It didn't take long for the Ellsworth Rd space to reach full capacity. In 2014—after years of meetings, research, and planning—a 5½-acre plot of land was purchased on the other side of town, and plans and dreams for building a new home designed for efficiency and sustainability became a reality. A successful fundraising campaign brought over $2.1 million in owner investment and donations, allowing the Co-op to begin construction in late 2018.

In the summer of 2019, at the height of the busy season, the Blue Hill Co-op opened its new location—more than three times the size of the former storefront, with an impressive roof covered in a solar array that produces roughly half of the store's electricity.

Today, the Co-op has an extensive produce department that specializes in local offerings, as well as a vast selection of bulk items, cheeses, wellness products, and wine and craft beer, with Maine-made products available in every department throughout the store.

Shoppers near and far rely on the Co-op for high-quality, responsibly sourced food and products, including specialty foods for people living gluten-free, plant-based, keto, paleo, or any other dietary lifestyle. The Co-op Cafe features made-to-order and ready-to-go home-style food prepared with care and with the best ingredients, organic and locally sourced when possible.

During the pandemic, the Co-op was quickly recognized as a safe place to shop, taking early precautionary measures such as requiring masks, setting up sanitization stations, and limiting the number of shoppers inside the store at one time. And a new department was set up for online sales and curbside pickup, which remains the only option for fully integrated online grocery shopping on the peninsula.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Blue Hill Co-op has continued to grow beyond expectations thanks to an incredibly supportive co-op community, and has remained at the center of the local food economy.

Visit the Store

Blue Hill Co-op
70 South St.
Blue Hill, Maine
(207) 374-2165
https://bluehill.coop/

Hours:
Monday–Saturday:
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Sunday: 8 a.m to 6 p.m.

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Pasta e Ceci

A cousin of pasta e fagioli, this cozy soup features chickpeas instead of white beans.

make it!

Pasta e Ceci

Serves 4

Made with gluten-free pasta, this cleaned-up version of the classic soup is full of healthy flavor.

1 Tbs. olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped (1½ cups)
3 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)
3 plum or Roma tomatoes, seeded and chopped (2 cups)
1 15-oz. can chickpeas, rinsed and drained (we used Eden Organic Garbanzo Beans)
4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
½ cup gluten-free pasta (we used Jovial Foods Gluten-Free Brown Rice Elbows)
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
6 Tbs. grated Parmesan cheese
2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh basil or parsley, for garnish

Eden Organic Garbanzo Beans

1. Heat oil in large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion and rosemary sprigs, and sauté 5–7 minutes, or until onion has softened.
2. Add garlic, and sauté 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, and season with salt, if desired. Sauté 3–5 minutes. Remove rosemary sprigs.
3. Add chickpeas, and slightly mash with fork or potato masher to thicken soup. Add broth, and bring to a boil. Add pasta, and cook 1 minute less than package directions suggest.
4. Season soup with salt, if desired, and pepper. Garnish each serving with 1 Tbs. Parmesan and 1 tsp. basil.

Per serving: 360 cal; 13g protein; 9g total fat (2g sat fat); 57g carb; 5mg chol; 500mg sod; 10g fiber; 8g sugar

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